

REMARKS

Claims 1-8, 10, 12-23, 25, and 27-30 are currently pending, wherein claims 9, 11, 24 and 26 have been canceled, and claims 1 and 16 have been amended to include the subject matter of claims 11 and 26 respectively. Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration in view of the above-identified amendments and the remarks presented herein below.

At the outset, Applicant notes with appreciation the indication that claims 2, 3, 10-15, 17, 18 and 25-30 contain allowable subject matter and would be allowed if rewritten in independent form.

In paragraph 2, the Office Action rejects claims 1, 4-9, 16 and 19-24 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,716,573 to Bergstrom et al. ("Bergstrom"). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Independent claims 1 and 16 have been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claims 11 and 26 respectfully. Therefore, claims 1 and 16 are patentably distinguishable over Bergstrom.

Claims 4-8 and 19-23 variously depend from independent claims 1 and 16. Therefore, claims 4-8 and 19-23 are patentably distinguishable over Bergstrom for at least those reasons presented above with respect to claims 1 and 16. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 4-9, 16, and 19-24 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a).

This application is in condition for allowance. Notice of same is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner have any questions regarding this application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at the telephone number provided below.

Respectfully submitted,

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